

Cultural Chronicle: A Multicultural Resource for Elementary Teachers

Honors Thesis (HONR 499)

by

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Abstract

Multicultural education is important for students beginning in the earliest years of schooling. It must be introduced early and reinforced frequently. The teachers of these students need the appropriate knowledge, skills, and resources to implement multicultural education in their classroom. Teachers often neglect to implement multicultural education believing it is too much work or because they are afraid of making a mistake. I created a resource is to be used by elementary school teachers to assist in implementing multicultural education in their classroom. I compiled children's books, songs, and artwork created by Black and Latinx persons. These creative works reflect the thoughts, ideas, and lives of those who created them. I created a website to be used as a supplement to multicultural education in an elementary classroom. The website created can be found at <https://mesmikaela.wixsite.com/culturalchronicle>.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. Emily Hoffman for supporting and advising me throughout the creation of this creative project. Throughout the two years of knowing Dr. Hoffman, she has always shown care and support for me. Her willingness to accommodate based on the unanticipated events of this semester helped tremendously in finishing this project.

I would like to thank Mr. Robbie Wilford for encouraging me to pursue this project that initially started in his class. He expressed his support and willingness to assist in this project early on which was reassuring.

I would like to thank Barbara and Lyle Strahm for supporting me throughout the creation of this project and the past four years of my college career

Process Analysis Statement:

Introduction:

Multicultural education is important beginning in the earliest years of life. It must be introduced early and reinforced often. Schools play a vital role in preparing students for society. They interact with students nearly every day for about nine months. They have the opportunity to teach their students about the world and the role they have in that world. Implementing multicultural education involves content from different cultural groups, developing positive attitudes, and creating an environment of equal status (Gill, 2017). Educators are tasked with taking on the role of preparing students for our diverse and changing society through multicultural education.

There are challenges that accompany teaching multicultural lessons which steer educators away from them. The teachers of these students need the appropriate knowledge, skills, and resources to implement multicultural education in their classroom. Multicultural teaching requires knowing more about your students' backgrounds, cultures, and experiences. It requires teaching students as people who exist inside and outside of the classroom. There are many different communication styles and learning approaches that should be utilized in the classroom. Many aspects of multicultural education seem daunting and tedious. These aspects are necessary for the achievement and confidence of students in the classroom (Alsubaie, 2015). Multicultural education is important no matter the diversity of the classrooms. The world around students is becoming more diverse each year and educators are to be preparing students for that world.

In order to combat the challenges faced by elementary teachers implementing multicultural education, I created a multicultural resource in the form of a website. This website project began as a way to assist educators in implementing multicultural education into their classrooms. The lessons created include discussions that require critical thinking skills, representation of Latinx and Black people, and integration of multicultural education into curriculum. This resource is to be used in addition to multicultural education teaching practices such as self-reflection, equity pedagogy, creation of a welcoming classroom environment, and teaching to support various learning styles. I created a user friendly website containing over a hundred resources to be used and a variety of additional sources to be explored. This website can be used by educators and students as a tool to assist in multicultural education, or by others wanting to educate themselves further.

Website Components:

The website contains a home, resources, about, and sources page. The home page provides an overview of the posts available on the website. The resources page of the website contains 172 unique posts. There are 31 Black literature posts. There are 26 Black music posts. There are 31 Black art posts. There are 27 Latinx literature posts. There are 26 Latinx music posts. There are 31 Latinx art posts. The about page contains information about myself. The sources page contains sources I used while creating the posts and sources that could be utilized further to assist in multicultural lessons in the classroom.

Each literature post is titled the name of the children's book being focused on. The post image is of the children's book. Within the post is an image of the chosen book with a link to purchase the book attached, the author's name, a description of the book,

and the awards that the book has received. Many of the posts also contain a link to a read-aloud of the book, discussion questions that relate to the story, or activities for different subject areas that relate to the story. Many of the Latinx literature posts also contain a link to buy a bilingual or Spanish version of the book.

Each music post is titled the name of the musician being focused on. The post image is an image of the video of the chosen song by that musician. Within each post is the chosen song, the artist of that song, and a segment of lyrics from the song. Attached to each musician post is a video of the song. Many of the posts also contain discussion questions relating to the song and specifically the segment of lyrics included in the post. Some music posts also contain links to articles to gain more information about the musician, background of the song, or context of the time period when the song was released.

Each art post is titled the name of the artist being focused on. The post image is of one piece of artwork featured in the post. Within each post is artwork created by that artist, the title of each piece of art, and when each piece of artwork was created. Many of the posts also contain discussion questions relating to the artwork shown or activities to do relating to the style or subject of the artwork. Some art posts also contain links to articles to gain more information about the artist.

The sources page contains a list of sources and what they can be used to find. I used each of these sources to create this website. They could be utilized further and in more depth. There are sources for literature for finding discussion questions, activities, buying books, finding read alouds, finding books based on a specific criteria, and compiling lists of books. There are sources for musicians for finding music videos, lyric videos, listening to music, and compiling a list of songs. This sources page is to be used

to research artists, musicians, and literature found elsewhere. These sources can be utilized to create a multicultural lesson plan based on any creative work.

Research Process:

While researching literature, I began by making a list of children's books I already had featuring Latinx and Black characters. I researched Black and Latinx children's authors. I also used the tag feature and bookshelves created by people on GoodReads to discover more Latinx and Black children's books and authors. I chose books of the chosen authors' that featured Black or Latinx characters. I did not choose any books featuring animal characters. I did this because I was looking for books by Black or Latinx authors that depicted them, their lives, or their ideas as a Black or Latinx person. I listened to a read aloud of each book that I intended on including a post for. I did this to determine whether I wanted to choose this book for the website and to assist in creating discussion questions for that book. I also used resources available on TeachingBooks.net to assist in creating discussion questions and activities based on a children's book.

When researching Black music, I began by making a list of Black musicians I was already aware of. I then researched other influential and important Black musicians to add to my list. I used Spotify to also search for playlists containing Black empowerment songs. Once I had a large list of musicians, I researched and listened to songs by each musician. I then determined if I wanted to put the musician on my website. If I decided to make a post for that musician, I then looked closely at the lyrics of their songs to decide which song of theirs would be beneficial to focus on. I created my own discussion questions and activities for the musicians based on their artwork and lives. After choosing all of musicians to focus on, I created a Spotify playlist that contained songs by

each musician including the song focused on for each musician's post. The research process for Latinx music proved to be very different from and more challenging than the research process for Black music.

When researching Latinx music, I began by making a list of Latinx musicians I already knew about. This was a very short list of artists.. I researched Latinx musicians in a variety of ways. I researched those who were influential, those who were popular worldwide, those who were popular in the United States, those who were considered important, and those who were emerging musicians. I looked at where they were from and how they identified themselves. Once I had a list, I went through every person and began to research their music. I would look up multiple songs of theirs. Many of the songs were in Spanish. I began learning Spanish this semester while student teaching in Texas, but my Spanish is not good enough to translate whole songs. I would listen to the songs. I would also use multiple different websites to translate and check translations of the songs. After figuring out the lyrics, I would then determine which song by that artist would be best to focus on for the website. There were some musicians I wanted to focus on because of their popularity, but none of their songs were appropriate for an elementary classroom. I created my own discussion questions and activities for the musicians based on their artwork and lives. After choosing the musicians to focus on, I then made another Spotify playlist with these musicians and their songs.

While researching art, I created lists of Black and Latinx artists. I was not knowledgeable of many Latinx or Black visual artists before conducting this research. I researched artists who were influential, emerging, popular, and making an impact in the United States. I found all of the chosen artists through these searches and articles posted on sites such as Artsy and Latinx Spaces. I compiled a list of artist. I then

researched their artwork to determine if it would be appropriate and engaging for elementary students. I then chose images of some artwork by the chosen artists to feature on their post. I created all of the discussion questions and activities listed on the artist posts.

Application:

This website was created for elementary teachers and students. Many of the resources could be used by secondary teachers with only slight alterations. This resource is a supplement to multicultural education. Using this website in a classroom will not suffice for multicultural education, but it has the ability to help in many ways. It can help teachers in implementing multicultural lessons and learning how to create their own multicultural lessons. These lessons should not be used as they are without question or thought; they should be altered by the educator to fit the needs and knowledge of their students. Multicultural education is not an add-on, but instead should be infused into the curriculum. Multicultural education can be infused into any subject. The majority of the resources on this website put multiculturalism into English lessons, but there are also many history, art, and science lessons.

I want this website to reach as many people as possible. Within the next year, I plan on purchasing a domain for the website. I have already began spreading the reach of this website on a smaller scale. I have sent the website out to friends, classmates from previous semesters, and whole class group chats that are still active. I have also posted the website on my own social media. I am able to track the analytics of the website to see how many people have visited the website and what posts are being looked at. These numbers have increased as I have shared the website with others.

Conclusion:

Through carrying out this project, I learned about myself, other educators, and education. I learned that I did not know much about musicians and artists. There were very few of the Black and Latinx artists that I had heard of. I had not been continually educating myself on the influential people in the world around me. I learned about educators and organizations trying to do projects similar to the one I was doing. I was able to use aspects of their knowledge and resources to help in creating my own website. In creating this project, I began to think more critically. I was thinking critically when choosing my posts and when creating lesson ideas for those posts. Although it can be difficult to find ways to implement multicultural education into the curriculum, it is necessary. The resources are available to adapt lessons. Educators must be willing to learn about their students, other cultures, and their own biases in order to appropriately infuse multicultural education into their classroom curriculum.

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Website:

<https://mesmikaela.wixsite.com/culturalchronicle>

Home Page:



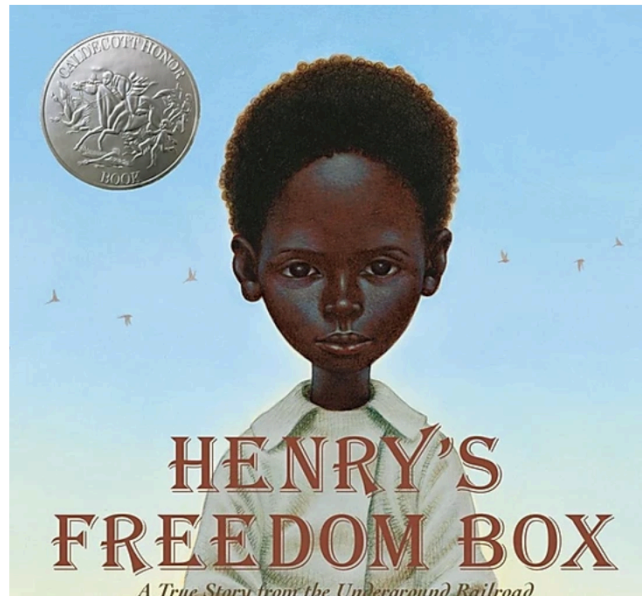
Henry's Freedom Box: A True Story from the Underground Railroad

By: Ellen Levine and Kadir Nelson

"A stirring, dramatic story of a slave who mails himself to freedom. Henry Brown doesn't know how old he is. Nobody keeps records of slaves' birthdays. All the time he dreams about freedom, but that dream seems farther away than ever when he is torn from his family and put to work in a warehouse. Henry grows up and marries, but he is again devastated when his family is sold at the slave market. Then one day, as he lifts a crate at the warehouse, he knows exactly what he must do: He will mail himself to the North. After an arduous journey in the crate, Henry finally has a birthday -- his first day of freedom."

Awards:

- Caldecott Honor 2008
- Commended Notable Children's Book 2008
- CCBC Choices Selection 2008



Discussion Questions:

Before Reading:

- What do you know about the underground railroad?
- What do you know about slaves?
- What does it mean to be free?
- What is slavery?

During/After Reading:

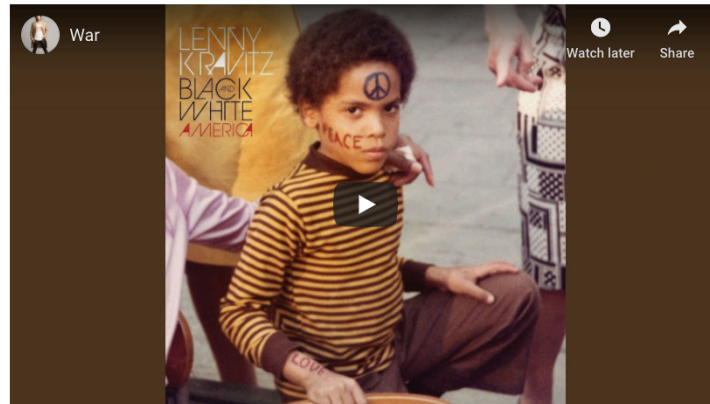
- Why is slavery bad?
- What are some things slaves were not allowed to do?
- What words would you use to describe Henry?
- What did Henry win at the end?
- Has anyone ever been mean to you because of how you looked or where you are from? How did that make you feel?

Read Aloud by Ellen Levine



Black Music Post:

Lenny Kravitz



"War"

Lyric Snippet:

"Do you think we can start over?
Do we have the eyes to see?
Is there any more devotion
Left inside our will to be?
Or do you think that it's over?
Inevitable prophecy
Do you see any other way
That we can recover?
If so you can work with me

I say war no more
I'm not going to fight this war no more"

Discussion Questions:

- What do you think this song means?
- What line stands out to you? Why?
- What does he mean when he sings "do we have the eyes to see?"
- War refers to any kind of struggle or conflict. What "war" do you think he is referring to? What is a "war" you have encountered in your own life?



Ekhymosis



La Tierra
(The World)

Lyric Snippet:

"Ama la tierra en que naciste
Amala es una y nada mas
A la mujer que te pario
Amala es una y nada mas
Ama tu hermano ama tu raza
Amala es una y nada mas
Ama tu sangre y no la riegues por ahí
Amala es una y nada mas"

(Love the land on which you were born
Love it, it's one and nothing more
The woman who gave birth to you
Love her, she's one and nothing more)

Love your brother, love your race
Love it, it's one and nothing more
Love your blood and don't spill it there
Love it, it's one and nothing more)

Discussion Questions:

- What do you think this song means?
- What land were you born on? What does this mean beyond determining your nationality?
- What's the importance of loving others? How can you show others love?
- What do you think is meant by the lines

"Ama tu sangre y no la riegues por ahí
Amala es una y nada mas"
(Love your blood and don't spill it there
Love it, it's one and nothing more)?



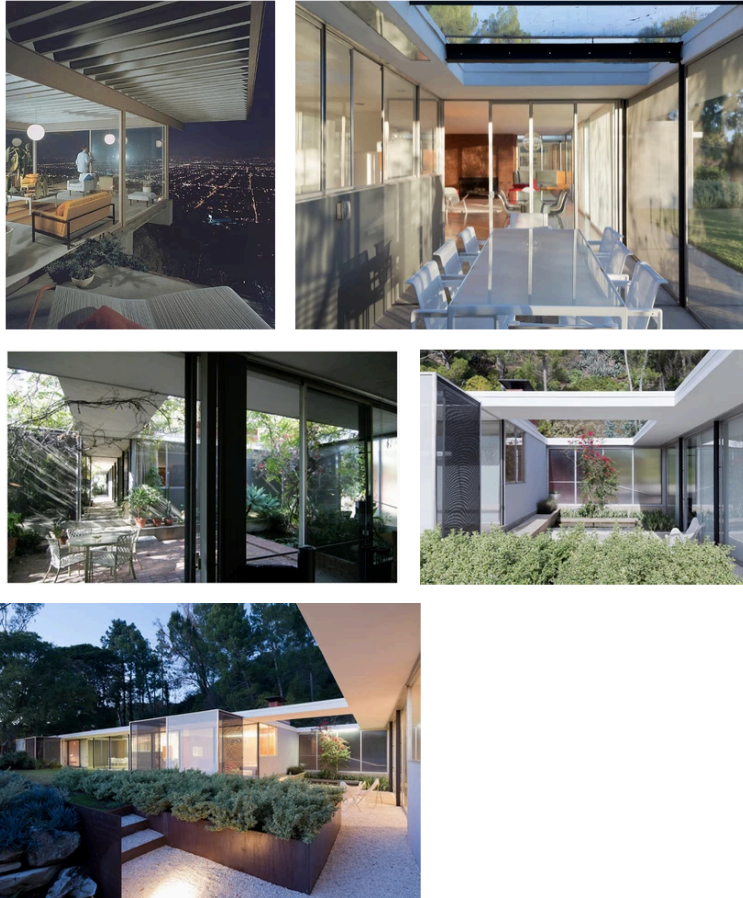
Art Post:

Raphael Soriano



Lipetz House (1936)









Shulman House (1950)

Discussion Questions:

- When do you think these houses were built?
- What is a person who designs homes or buildings called?
- What do you like best about this house (show images of one house)?
- Why do you think there are so many windows in the houses he made?
- How do houses bring people together?
- What is the importance of different areas (porch, bedroom, living room, ect) of a home?
- Is there a place in your house that is your favorite? Why?



Black Musician Playlist:



PLAYLIST

Black Musicians

Created by Mikaela Strahm • 28 songs, 1 hr 52 min





PLAY

...

Filter

	TITLE	ARTIST	ALBUM
♡	Scream	Michael Jackson, J...	Scream
♡	Ebony And Ivory - (Tribute to Paul McCartn...	Studio Allstars	Soft Rock
♡	War	Lenny Kravitz	Black and White A...
♡	All Along the Watchtower	Jimi Hendrix	Electric Ladyland
♡	Back Water Blues (with James P. Johnson)	Bessie Smith, Jame...	Classic Sessions Vol. 1
♡	Black Satin	Miles Davis	On The Corner
♡	I Wish	Stevie Wonder	Songs In The Key O...
♡	BROWN SKIN GIRL	Blue Ivy, SAINT JH...	The Lion King: The ...
♡	They Don't Care About Us	Michael Jackson	HIStory - PAST, PRE...
♡	His Eye Is On The Sparrow	Whitney Houston	Sparkle: Original M...

Latinx Musicians Playlist:



PLAYLIST

Latinx Musicians

Created by Mikaela Strahm • 29 songs, 1 hr 49 min

PLAY

...

Filter

	TITLE	ARTIST	ALBUM
♡	Havana - Live	Camila Cabello	Havana (Live)
♡	Mi Persona Favorita	Alejandro Sanz, Ca...	Mi Persona Favorita
♡	Waka Waka (This Time for Africa) [The Offi...	Shakira, Freshlygro...	Waka Waka (This Ti...
♡	Dance Again	Selena Gomez	Rare
♡	Mi Gente	J Balvin, Willy Willi...	Mi Gente
♡	PIENSO EN TU MIRÁ - Cap.3: Celos	ROSALÍA	El Mal Querer
♡	Positivo	J Balvin, Michael Br...	Positivo
♡	Perfect	Topic, Ally Brooke	Perfect
♡	Maria Maria (feat. The Product G&B) - Radi...	Santana, The Produ...	Supernatural (Legac...
♡	Oye Como Va	Santana	Abraxas